

AN
ASSIZE SERMON,

PREACH'D at

N O R W I C H,

On WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1753.

AN ASSISTIVE SERMON,

PREACHED AT

W O R C H, C H,



ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1753.

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S E R M O N

PREACH'D at the

A S S I Z E S

HELD AT

N O R W I C H,

On Wednesday, August 15, 1753.

B E F O R E

The Right Honourable Sir THOMAS PARKER, Knt.
Chief Baron of his MAJESTY's Court of *Exchequer*;

and the Honourable Sir MARTIN WRIGHT, Knt. one of
the Justices of his MAJESTY's Court of *King's-Bench*.

Published at the Request of the HIGH SHERIFF, and the GENTLE-
MEN of the GRAND JURY.

By GLOCESTER RIDLEY, LL.B.

Rector of *Weston-Longville* in *Norfolk*.

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MDCCLIII.

The Difference and respective Use of the Moral,
Civil, and Ceremonial Laws.

A

FERMON

PREACH'D at the

ASSIZES

HELD AT

WORWICH,

On Wednesday, August 15, 1753.

BEFORE

The Right Honourable Sir THOMAS PARKER, Knight,
Chief Baron of his MAJESTY'S Court of Exchequer.

And the Honourable Sir MARTIN WRIGHT, Knight, one of
the Justices of his MAJESTY'S Court of King's Bench.

At the Request of the Honourable Sir, and the Gentlemen
of the Grand Jury.



By GLOUCESTER RIDLEY, M.A.

Regent of Wotton-Langville in Wiltshire.

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St. Martin's Lane, in London; and by Mr. T. M. in
Wiltshire, and Mr. Gledhill, in London.

MDCCLIII.

T O

AMBLETON CUSTANCE, Esq;

SH-SHERIFF for the County of NORFOLK;

Honourable GEORGE TOWNSHEND, Esq;

Sir HORATIO PETTUS, Bart.

Sir RANDAL WARD, Bart.

Sir JOHN TURNER, Bart.

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MILES BRANTHWAYTE,

THOMAS GREEN,

PHILIP BEDINGFIELD,

THOMAS LOBB CHUTE,

THOMAS BULLOCK,

HUGH HARE,

} Esqs.

MEMEN of the GRAND JURY for the said County,

This S E R M O N,

Published at their REQUEST,

Is with great Respect,

I N S C R I B E D

By their most humble,

And most obedient Servant,

GLOCESTER RIDLEY.

WILKINSON CUSTANCE, JR.

...for the County of Norfolk;

Use their most powerful

PSALM CXLVII. 19.

He sheweth his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Israel.

IF we reflect on the numerous systems of Moralists, the voluminous codes and digests of Legislators, and the many rites of atonement and propitiation taught and practised in the world, we shall see the judgments and labours of the learned, various as they are, yet concurring to witness *the darknefs of human understanding*, which Philosophy trimmed its midnight lamp to enlighten; *the perverseness of the human will*, which Justice drew its vindictive sword to restrain; and *the guilt that still continued to burthen Conscience*, notwithstanding their united endeavours to regulate the Actions of Mankind.

But who were the Philosophers? Men, who sate in the same Darknefs that covered the Nations they instructed. If they drew from their own fountains only, they were *blind Leaders of the Blind*. It is true they travelled for Instruction, and consulted the sages of antiquity: but those sages were Men under like circumstances, deriving their beams from a still remoter source of light; where, multiply the reflexions as often as we will, we must at length arrive at a sufficient fountain and origin, which can be only *the father*

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of

Jam. i. *of lights, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. The*
17. *divine geometrician, who composed the world, and know*
the natures, properties, uses, relations, proportions, and
bearings of things in themselves, and with regard to one an
other, can alone comprehend those fitnesses, can alone dis
cover those general rules resulting from them, which con
stitute the eternal law of nature.

Again, Who were the Legislators and Magistrates? *Ma*
of like passions with those whose passions they were to govern.
 Their commands might raise mounds to restrain the little
 floods, and force them to pay their tribute to the ocean: but
 would leave the ocean itself without shores, to rage, and
 overflow the world. Such were the antient Monarchies
 where little irregularities were curbed by a power that ob
 served no bounds itself, and was scarce more supportable
 than the evils it pretended to suppress: but a well temper
 equal polity must be derived from the only potentate, *who*
judgments are right, and endure for ever; by whom kings
reign, and princes decree justice, by whom princes rule and
bles, even all the judges of the earth. Prov. viii. 15, 16.

Lastly, Who were the Priests, who pretended to atone
Heb. vii. *for sins, and propitiate heaven? Men, who needed daily*
27. *offer up sacrifice first for their own sins.* How was it pos
 sible for them to find out the methods of atonement?
Mark ii. *who can forgive sins save God only?* From Him only,
7. *whom the obligation of punishment is due, can the ten*
 of pardon and remission be known.

THIS, the Architect of nature, the King of all the earth, the offended Majesty of heaven, vouchsafed to do, in that he shewed his Words unto Jacob, his Statutes, and his Judgments unto Israel.

These terms *Words*, *Statutes*, and *Judgments*, will lead me to shew the several kinds of laws, how they differ, and what are their respective uses.

WORDS or Commands, by the general consent of Interpreters, refer to the *Moral Law*; STATUTES to the *Ceremonial Law*, or Religious Rites; and JUDGMENTS to *Forensic Laws*.*

These

* The WORD of the LORD signifies in general *Divine Revelation*; whence the secret place, where God spake from between the Cherubim on being consulted, is called by a name derived from this root, **דְּבַר**, and may be translated *Oracle*: but when it is restrained to a particular species of Revelation, it means the *Commandments* or *δέκα λόγους*; He wrote on the tables the TEN WORDS which the LORD spake unto you in the Mount out of the midst of the fire. *Deut. x. 4.*

STATUTES are Injunctions exactly described, or, as the antient manner was, engraved; applied to decrees or positive rites imposed by sufficient authority, whose obligation flows, not from the apparent moral fitness, but from the will of the imposer. **חֻקִּים** *statuta non aliud sunt quam decretum regis absque ullâ ratione additâ.* R. S. & R. Levi. *Statuta sunt præcepta quæ non habent manifestam rationem.* R. D.

JUDGMENTS or Ordinances are such points as were determined for regulating the outward behaviour between man and man, even in matters between contending parties. *Sunt JUDICIA quæ inter hominem & socium ejus.* R. D. *Sæpe in sacris literis, ubi agitur de lege Dei, tria hæc vocabula conjunguntur, Mesvoth, Chuccim, et Mesphatim, quæ Græci translatore convertunt ἐνδοαὶς, δικαιώματα, et κέματα. Vide- tur autem mihi eorum opinio probabilis, qui, quoties ista conjunguntur, τὰς ἐνδοαὶς ex- tant eam legis partem quam moralem vocant, in quâ præcipitur quid Deo, quid proxi- mo debeamus; δικαιώματα vero, sacros ritus, totamque ad id ceremonialem legem; κέ-ματα denique, eam partem quæ ad civilem politiam et forenses controversias pertinet, judicalem appellant.* Apud Druf. in Crit. Sacris, ad Deut. vi. 1

These are nearly related to one another; in their *origin*, derived from the same divine fountain: in their *use*, intended to procure the happiness of mankind: in their *execution*, antiently placed in the same hands; for the King, who gave laws to a people, was at the same time the person who ministered in the sacred rites: and when God first separated them, he yet signified the nearness of their relation by committing to two Brothers, *Moses* and *Aaron*, the legislature and the priesthood. Length of time has produced a much wider difference, which it will be necessary to state, to procure the happy re-union of their influences, and prevent a confusion of them, in the conduct of our lives.

I. When we reflect, that we are the workmanship of
Pf. c. 3. God, that *He made us, not we ourselves*, that our beings, our powers, our faculties are derived from Him, we presently discern a necessary relation to him, and consequent duties devolving upon us: when we experience farther, that the preservation and enjoyments of our lives are dispensed by
Acts xiv. 17. his providence; for it is He, who *gives us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness*. We see that we are not only the work of his hands, but the objects of his care; not only by Creation, *his people*,
Pf. c. 3. but by his Providence, *the sheep of his pasture*. Here God
Deut. vi. 4. lays the foundation of his DIVINE ETHICS; *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*. And this dedication of ourselves, our affections, and powers, our Saviour tells us *is the FIRST and*
Matth. xxii. 37, 38. **GREAT Commandment.**

When

When we look from ourselves round us, and see mankind cast in the same mould that we are, endued with the same powers and faculties, subject to the same infirmities, labouring under the same wants; that we stand in need of their assistance, and they again of ours, we perceive that there is a Sameness among us; that what is naturally convenient and inconvenient to us, is equally so to them: Hence we are convinced of the reasonableness of another commandment which God gave the Jews, *Thou shalt love* Levit. xix. 18. *neighbour as thyself.* And on these two commandments Math. xxii. 40. our Saviour tells us, *hang all the law and the prophets.* It is the compendium of the decalogue, the abridgment of the laws.

This with all its deductions and proper applications in particular circumstances is that *lex non scripta, sed nata*, that which God, when he created human race, gave to mankind, wrote at the same time by the same fingers that fashioned us. And if our perception of things was clear, our judgments unprepossessed, and our wills unbiaſſed, these laws would appear evident. But if our first ancestor, in the perfection of his nature, could be misled by the present suggestions of sense, the curiosity of forbidden knowledge, and the prohibition of making his condition better than providence designed it, what preposterous and wrong elections must his posterity be likely to make, in the blindness of unassisted or misdirected reason, the clamour of appetite, and the tumult of passion.

It was therefore necessary, and because necessary, reasonable

sonable to be supposed, that God would prescribe to man the great lines of duty, and direct a course for him to proceed in. Accordingly the oldest historian informs us of frequent divine revelations to the patriarchs, mixing with the *moral* such *political* and *religious* points, as were convenient for them to know. And these, blended together in the ancestor, in whose person concurred the father, ruler and priest, delivered by tradition to his son, some pure and unmixt, others corrupted by their own additions.

This traditional *morality*, *polity*, and *religion*, was better preserved in the line of *Abraham*, than in the rest of the world. And when God foresaw that they would remit the care, and corrupt their traditional law delivered, he provided that the *moral* law should be engraven upon two tables of stone, and the *ceremonial* written in a book, together with such a system of *political* or civil laws, as would be necessary for that commonwealth into which he was then going to erect them.† The making the *Jews* a repository of his oracles was, tho' an honour to them, for the virtue of their ancestor *Abraham*, yet intended for the benefit of mankind, who, by degrees, received great assistance and improvement from it.

For these gracious purposes God shewed his words to *Jacob*, his statutes and his judgments unto *Israel*; and have

† We read not of the *Jews* corrupting their traditions in *Canaan* and *Aegypt* for 400 years, but rather that they were a means of informing those princes of God's will, and teaching their senators wisdom. Yet after they left *Aegypt*, and the law was secured, no sooner were they mingled with the heathen, but they lost their works. Where we see the wisdom of God in directing the law to be written when he foresaw that tradition would be no longer able to preserve it uncorrupted.

Pf. cv. 22.

Pf. cvi.

35.

not done so by any other nation, the Heathens continued a considerable time without the knowledge of his Laws. They had no more than what maim'd and interpolated tradition had brought amongst them. The progress of it among them is thus described by *Plato*, a very curious enquirer into antiquity. After the deluge he supposes "some were preserved in the mountains, and that for a time, want and wealth being equally strangers, there was a great simplicity of manners; there was no knowledge of letters or writing, they therefore followed the customs and institutes of their fathers, which they obeyed as *Laws*. As they encreased and colonies went off, they carried with them the constitutions of their fathers, mixing each such new laws to the circumstances of time and place required."†

As mankind still more encreased, these colonies would grow too near neighbours, and attempt to dispossess, or subvert one another: this introduced the science of war; and then, as the Greek language proves, their Ethics grew military, and Virtue itself, and the degrees of goodness were derived from courage and conduct in war.‡ After that a more settled state of things in *Greece* gave leisure to *Philosophy*; which employed itself first in the investigation of Nature from *Thales* down to *Socrates*, under whom it began to be applied

† Φέρε δὴ, νοήσωμεν μίαν (φθορὰν) τῶν πολλῶν ταύτην, τὴν τῷ κατὰ κλυσμῶ πολλῇ γενομένην. — Ὡς οἱ τότε περιφεύγοντες τὴν φθορὰν, σχεδὸν ὅρειοι τινὲς ἂν εἴεν νόμοις, ἐν κορυφαίᾳ σμικρὰ ζάπυρα, τῇ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένεσι διασισωσμένα. — πένητες μὲν . . . οὐκ ἔχοντες, οὐδ' ὑπὸ πενίας ἀναγκαζόμενοι, διάφοροι ἐαυτοῖς ἐγίνοντο. πλεῖστοι δ' οὐκ ἂν πού τι ἄλλο, ἀχρεστοὶ τε καὶ ἀνάγκη οὖντες. — ἀγαθοὶ μὲν δὴ διὰ ταῦτά τε ἦσαν, καὶ διὰ τὴν ἀπορίαν εὐφροσύνην. — οὐδὲ γὰρ γραμμάτια ἐστὶ πῶς τις ἐν τούτῳ τῷ μέρει τῆς περιόδου νομίσιν, ἀλλ' εἴθεσι καὶ τοῖς λεγομένοις παλαιοῖς νόμοις ἐπόμενοι ζῶσιν. *Platonis NOMON*, lib. iii. pag. 677.—680.

‡ Ἀρετὴν, ἀρετίαν, ἀρετὴς, ab Ἀρετῆς.

applied to Morals. Now the maxims and customs which had been handed down and implicitly received, were brought to an examen, reduced to some principles, and ethics were reformed by the beauty of actions resulting from the fitness, harmony, and proportion of things ; whence, instead of the martial *Ἀγέλη*, was substituted the philosophical *τὸ καλόν*, the *handsome* or *well proportioned action*. It received a different colour or form in the different schools, according to the end they proposed, or the *summum bonum* at which they aimed. The credit, reputation, and honour reflected from the action upon the doer of it, derived to the *Romans* from the *Peripatetic* school, appears to have been their idea of morality, by their *HONESTUM*, or *honourably done*.

But these principles were too *vague* to settle morality and too *feeble* to enforce the practice. And indeed to take our measures implicitly from common esteem, is to root up the eternal foundations of morality to build it on the modality of fancy. The *Hebrew* expressions are much more exact *to obey God's voice, to hearken to HIS words, to walk in HIS ways* : these direct us to precise determinate duties, and at the same time lay open our obligation to practise them, which shews the advantage the *Jews* had beyond the rest of the world in that God *shewed his Words unto Jacob, his Statutes, and his Judgments unto Israel* ; while the *Heathens* had not such knowledge of his laws. Their philosophers were aware that morality, as defined by them, wanted a sufficient authority to make it of any use ; and therefore constantly inform us, that it is the mind and reason of the Almighty, and upon the evidence of tradition tell us, that it was discovered by divine revelation to the primitive legislators.

II. But as some men disbelieve a God, or his Providence, they must be very ignorant of the moral Law, and its Obligations; it was therefore necessary to delineate to such their Duties afresh, and to bind those Duties on them by more immediate sanctions. *Human* laws, an *earthly* tribunal, and *temporal* coercions are absolutely necessary for those, who acknowledge no *divine* rule of right and wrong, who plead to the jurisdiction of the *Universal Judge*, and who laugh at *future* rewards and punishments.

Again, too many are so partial to their own vicious inclinations, as to exempt themselves, in their particular circumstances, from the obligation of the law; or at least venture upon the transgression, in hopes, either that God does not see, or may forget it, or is too good to punish, or may be compounded with by some means or other: such men require more particular directions, and threats of more determined punishments than the moral law can furnish.

Others, acknowledging their obligation in general, yet being left to their discretion, as to the time and manner, deceive themselves with a general intention of discharging it, yet never find a proper time to do so in any manner: such persons make it expedient to restrain the natural liberties of mankind, and prescribe several circumstances in themselves indifferent; such as modes of religious worship, relief of the poor, and many other instances. Farther, the genius of a people, the soil and situation of their country, their alliances and wars with other nations, and many like

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circum-

circumstances, are proper objects of human laws, convenient for the prosperity and well being of that particular country.

Lastly, to give effect to all these laws, it was necessary to establish the forms of claiming and recovering our dues, and of modelling the power of the nation, so as to compel, either the unwilling to do their duties, or offenders to suffer the resentment of the laws.

Since then human laws are to enforce the practice of morality, by making the injunctions of it more clear and particular, and by adding more immediate sanctions to it, they consist of two parts, the *definitive*, prescribing *quid faciendum*, of which the moral law is the *foundation*, tho' indifferent points may be superadded as prudent *means*; and the *vindictive*, appointing to the disobedient *quid patiendum*, the foundation of which must be either God's authority, or man's consent. The pillars therefore on which this law stand are, The moral law, and for the sake of that, submission to governors; which St. *Peter* expresses in three duties *Love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the king.* 1 *Pet.* ii. 17.

As polity comes in aid of morality, it should be our first and great care to acquaint ourselves well with the principles of that; this will more assuredly secure our conscientious obedience to human laws, and enable them more certainly to obtain their end, the prosperity of the people. And without this foundation laid, *Tully* tells us, civil laws are only the science of barrettry and chicane.*

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* *Juris natura ab hominis repetenda naturâ : qui aliter jus civile tradunt, non tam justitiæ, quam litigandi tradunt vias.* de Leg. lib. 1. 6. Morality may be traced

1. Let our first principle then be the *Fear of God*,† a belief of his being and providence, with a due regard and honour to be paid him, are the basis on which the structure of the state is built. *Plutarch* calls it the cement of society, and the support of all legislative power.”§ Which if you take away, *Tully* seems inclined to think that even human society itself would vanish.‡ It is the spirit that pervades the whole, and keeps the parts from dissolution. The greatest traitor therefore to his king and country is the profane scoffer, who labours to weaken the obligations of piety. The religion of our country, with its established modes of worship, its outguards and circumstances of time, place, manner, form, and the like, are, in a civil view, worth our most serious attention, so long as such establishment shall continue. And God forbid we should ever change it for the superstitions of papists, the enthusiasm of fanatics, or

traced from its natural fountains in that excellent treatise of *Bishop Cumberland* de legibus naturæ: discerned in its beauty and decency from *Puffendorff*: confirmed by the approbation and consent of the wisest nations, in *Grotius* and *Selden*: enforced by a divine authority in the *Old* and *New Testament*. In these only do we discover it to be a *Law*, in the rest it is but *Speculation*, or *History*.

† Sit igitur hoc jam principio persuasum civibus, dominos esse omnium rerum ac moderatores Deos, eaque quæ gerantur eorum geri ditione ac numine, eosdemque optumè de genere hominum mereri, et, qualis quisque sit, quid agat, quid in se admittat, quâ mente, quâ pietate colat religiones, intueri, piorumque et impiorum habere rationem: his enim rebus imbutæ mentes haud sanè abhorrebunt ab utili ac verâ sententiâ. . . . Utiles autem esse has opiniones quis neget, cum intelligat, quam multa firmentur jurejurando, quantæ saluti sint fœderum religiones? quam multos divini supplicii metus à scelere revocarit? quamque sancta sit societas civium inter ipsos, Dîs immortalibus interpositis tum iudicibus, tum testibus. Hæc legis procemium. *Tull. de Leg. lib. 2. 7.*

§ Συνεπτικὸν ἀπάσης Κοινωνίας, καὶ νομοθεσίας ἔργισμα.

† Lib. 1. de Nat. Deor. §. 2.

the absurdities of infidels, on all whom equally God in his just judgments has *sent so strong a delusion that they should believe a lye*. Where such care is neglected, as *Plato* observes, quite another system of laws ought to be framed. “ In the times of *Rhadamanthus*, says he, men believed a
 “ God and his providence; so that by the application of
 “ an oath, he decided matters soon, and certainly: but
 “ now men deny the one or the other, what had its effect
 “ in his days will have none in ours. Mens opinions concerning the Deity being changed, it becomes necessary to
 “ change the laws also.||

To such as know themselves under the obligation of *divine* laws, their measure of obedience to human laws may be thus stated;

AB. iv. If the laws of man should contradict the laws of God
 19. we are to regard the prior obligation, and *obey God rather than man*: at the same time we must shew a regard to the magistrate by a patient submission to the penalty they inflict; for human laws have an alternative of obedience, *aut facere quod faciendum, aut pati quod patiendum*.

If both injoin the same duty, but human law adds a circumstance which was before indifferent, we must discharge

|| ‘Ραδαμάνθυς . . . κατιῶδε τὲς τότε ἀνθρώπους ἡγεμένους ἐναργῶς εἶναι θεοὺς — εἶναι ἀπλαῖ καὶ ταχιῶαι δίκαι ἐκρίνοντ’ αὐτῶ. διδὸς γὰρ περὶ ἐκάστων τῶν ἀμφισβητησάντων ὅρκον τοῖς ἀμφισβητῆσιν, ἀπηλλάττετο ταχὺ καὶ ἀσφαλῶς. νῦν δὲ δὴ ὅτι μὴ τί φασιν ἀνθρώπων οἱ τοπαράπαν οὐχ ἡγνῆνται θεοί, οἱ δὲ ἐφροντίζουσιν ἡμῶν αὐτὰς διακρίναι. — ἐκίτι δὴ τοῖς νῦν ἀνθρώποις ἡ ‘Ραδαμάνθυος ἂν εἴη πρέπουσα τέχνη ἐν δίκαις. μετὰ βιβληκυσίων ἐν τῶν περὶ θεῶς δοξῶν ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, μεταβάλλειν δεῖ καὶ τὲς νόμους. —
 Platonis NOMON, Lib. xii. p. 948.

his duty in obedience to the divine law, and *in the manner* prescribed, in obedience to the human law : and if the manner prescribed will not obtain the end, we must endeavour as far as we are able (without unlawfully meddling with other people's lives, liberties, properties, offices, and comforts) to give it all the effect we can by our own discretion ; for a human law enjoining *so far*, is no abrogation of a divine law enjoining *farther*.

2. To the *fear of God* we must add a *Love of the brother*. *Self-love* is that malignant principle, whose first main-
 drew upon him the curse of *Socrates*, as it is the root of destruction to a people.* I mean not to send every private man, mechanic and labourer to study and lay schemes for the public good ; they are as little qualified for such employment, as the novice in the fable to direct and dispense the influences of the sun. To them, who cannot see how public good communicates to individuals, we may indulge attention to immediate recompence. They will sufficiently serve the public by industry in their callings, tho' their own advantage be the sole aim : provided, that they hold an implicit obedience to those laws of God, of whose expediency they may not be competent judges ; " to pursue health with honesty ; " " to enjoy it with temperance ; " " and of their abundance to communicate freely to the necessities of others." But rapacity, corruption, and injustice could be stigmatized with infamy wherever they are found. They are the cankers that prey upon the vitals of public

Rectèque Socrates execrari eum solebat, qui primus utilitatem à naturâ secessisset : id enim querebatur caput esse exitiorum omnium. Tull. de Leg. lib. i. 12.

Ecclus x. good. *Because of unrighteous dealings, injuries, and riches*
 8. *got by deceit, says the son of Syrac, the kingdom is translated*
from one people to another. Where mercenary views are the
 aim, and selfish maxims are the principles of acting in ge-
neral, there the constitution must be hastening to its decline.
 For if the public good be left to result only from the indi-
 viduals each taking care of himself, tho' God were but
 neutral spectator, and left such a people to the genuine
 issue of their own corruption, there is no prudence in law,
 no authority in government sufficient to prevent the ruin
 to which this inversion of polity necessarily leads. Among
 ourselves it has introduced a necessity of mending, explain-
 ing and multiplying our laws so much, that, I believe,
 find our way back again to the *common law*, and *common*
ness, would be one of the greatest blessings we could wish
 for. For such frequent amendments and explications produce
 only in the event new lessons for educating mankind in the
 science of evasion; till disobedience, grown formidable from
 its numbers, stalks fearlessly abroad, destroying like the pesti-
 lence at noon-day, a nuisance to the honest subject, and
 terror even to the magistrate. A scene of confusion and
 horror which demands all our care and studies to prevent,
 especially by example to recommend and infuse into the
 public, a spirit of justice, and love—for our country shall
 say? that is too narrow for a gospel virtue,—a love of human
 kind. There is a ductileness and pliancy in the manners of
 a people, easily fashioned by example and imitation. For
Deut. i. this reason God commands the rulers to be *known among*
 13. *the tribes.* i. e. Men of approved characters fit to be set
 before the people as their examples and leaders. Agreed
 to this was the law of the twelve tables, *Cæteris Speciebus*

Quod si est, says Tully in his comment on it, *tenemus* *ma*; this one rule well observed secures all we wish; for, he proceeds, all history and experience inform us, that the chief men of a city are, so are the rest of the citizens; and that the example of sin in such men is more pernicious than merely the sin itself.†

3. The third rule laid down by St. Peter is, *Honour the* 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. Rom. xiii. 4. Which must be extended *not only to the king as supreme, but also to all subordinate governors, sent by him for punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that well.* They are *the ministers of God to us for good.* We see the end of government, "*the people's good;*" the means of obtaining it, "*by honouring our government.*" Give these two points their due influence and subordination, and our political principles will be rational and true. The twelve tables, that laboured collection from all antient lawgivers, the foundation of the Roman *civil*, of our own *common* law, preserve this idea of government very strongly and clearly, where they lay down the end of government, the welfare of the people. The means of obtaining it are express'd in two laws, the substance of which is, Let the governors rule according to the laws, and the subject pay a ready obedience, the public welfare will be secured. § But if the subject aims at private felicity,

Ut enim cupiditatibus principum et vitiis infici solet tota civitas; sic emendari et corrigi continentia.—Nam licet videre, si velis replicare memoriam temporis, qualescunque summi civitatis viri fuerint, talem civitatem fuisse: quæcunque ratio morum in principibus exstiterit, eandem in populo secutam.—Plus ex illo quam peccato nocent. de Leg. lib. iii. 13, 14.

SALUS POPULI SUPREMA LEX ESTO. Finis enim justî imperii, ut sapientes

city, by factiously disturbing the public, the public resentment, or his own wheel of confusion, will turn upon himself; or if the governor aims at extending his influence and authority by imperiously oppressing individuals, he will lose that power, which he endeavours to *stretch too far*. He is a real enemy to his country. Each loses the end he imprudently pursues. While the governors, who make people's welfare their care, command from the happy subject the *honour* they desire; and the subject by paying honour to his governors effectually secures the *happiness* he wishes. Dominion may be the lust of Gentile rulers, but benefits and service to them they rule, must be the ambition

Math. xx. of Christian ones. Whosoever will be great among you
^{26, 27,} *him be your minister: and whosoever will be chief among*
^{28.} *let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.* In return the subject is allowed no liberty of obedience to the supreme power, whatever is enjoined by that, wherever lodged by consent, becomes law, and must be complied with either by an *active* or a *passive* obedience.

III. My subject leads me in the last place to treat of *ceremonial law*: but here I shall be extremely brief.

The moral law was intended to make man happy in this world and the next. His corruption and perverseness endangered his losing both. The civil law was added to secure

pientes docent, utilitas obedientium æstimatur et salus. Amm. Marcellini xx. JUSTA IMPERIA SUNTO. HISQUE CIVES MODESTE ET SINE RESISTENTIA SATIONE PARENTO. de Leg. lib. iii. 3.

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temporal, and the ceremonial was more graciously vouchsafed to secure his eternal happiness, notwithstanding that corruption and perverseness. For this purpose in the fulness of time Christ appeared in our nature, to be our representative, to atone for our sins by his meritorious death, and thereby discharge our obligation to punishment. To direct mens hopes to this atonement, before the incarnation, the whole world was educated in the doctrine of sacrifices; a rite, which unless divinely instituted for that end, was amazing in itself; and more so, that it so universally prevailed, and that it as universally ceased after the true sacrifice appeared. Afterwards, the whole ceremonial law was perfected; collected from the patriarchal rituals, and such additions as were necessary to make it answer the end and design of being *a schoolmaster to lead men unto Christ*, and to keep alive their hopes and expectations of the Messias. A commemoration of this blessing is as necessary now to us, in remembrance of him who has died for us, and to shew forth to all succeeding ages his important death, till he comes to finish the work of our redemption.

But is not this an encouragement to break the moral law, seeing the pardon of our transgressions against it is already sealed? No; Christ *came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them*, to compleat and perfect them. (1.) Enacting the moral law anew by his authority; (2.) Restoring the spiritual sense, which the Jewish doctors had commented away, and the Heathens had lost; (3.) Making the observance of it the terms of our acceptance; (4.) Encouraging future obedience, notwithstanding past transgressions, by the assurance of conditional pardon; (5.) Ex-

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citing us to it by the lively motives of love and gratitude (6.) Affording us assistance for the easier discharge of it, the aids of the Holy Spirit; and after all (7.) Accepting our sincere endeavours instead of perfect obedience. *Do then make void the law through faith? God forbid: Yea, establish the law.*

Rom. iii.

31.

Rom. xiii.

7.

Matth.

xxv. 21.

The good Christian is therefore the best moralist, and the best subject. May we all under the happy influences of these glad tidings of the gospel learn to *render to all their dues*; and by making it the steady principle, and passion of our lives to give *glory to God on high*, promote *peace on earth*, and bear a constant *good will towards men*, may we behave with dignity in those trusts and offices to which God's providence appoints us here; and hereafter, through the mercies of our Saviour atoning for our errors, infirmities, imperfections, and malicious sins repented of and forsaken, receive the ravishing approbation, of *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy LORD.*

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